

**Tool 5.2**

Taking local action for climate-resilience

CLARITY Competence Area:

Taking collective action for climate resilience, ecosystem regeneration, and societal transformation

GreenComp Competence Area:

Acting for sustainability

Why use this tool?

This tool introduces activities that can help actively build the climate resilience of the local community and local ecosystems now and in the long run. They contribute to re-building a community of support, and to restoring the health of local ecosystems. Besides, this tool fosters agency by increasing the learner's confidence that they themselves can make a difference. They also build collaborative competences that are critical to pursue collective action in any field.

Activity 5.2.3

Supporting local climate resilience actions

Overview

This activity can be taken up by young adults on campuses or in private/public areas with proper authorizations. They enable learners to put into practice what they have learnt about various solutions, including nature-based solutions, to shield vulnerable population groups from the effects of heatwaves in a city, or in particular districts of the city where there is little vegetal cover. Actions can include creating spaces to share information about emotional wellbeing and support each other when climate anxiety arises. Actions can also contribute to the implementation of the local/municipal climate adaptation plan, through nature-based solutions for instance.

Curriculum linkage

Sustainability studies (e.g. urban planning, architecture...), Geography and Natural Science

Competences built

Courage, innovation, societal agency, collaboration, accountability and humility.

Prep Work

- Acquire an in-depth knowledge of the local climate adaptation plan and of stakeholders
- Technical knowledge about climate adaptation and resilience is essential

BASIC INFO



Age range:

12+ for the group initiative and
18+ for the municipal project

Duration:

Several weeks to months

Group size:

Small (3-6)

Level of difficulty:

Advanced - the educator will need to have an in-depth knowledge of the local climate adaptation plan and of stakeholders

Materials/space required:

Depends on the project

Location:

Outdoors

Engagement of external stakeholders:

Yes - collaboration with local stakeholders is essential.



Competences/activities to practice first by the teacher:

- Activities under 3.4. could help prepare both the educator and learners for this activity.

Levels in the activity

1. Group initiative
2. Municipal project

Level 1: Group initiative

1. Introduce the exercise by highlighting that the group initiative shall materialize in the design of a project to be implemented locally to the benefit of the school/university, community and/or ecosystem. The project should aim at building resilience to the impacts of climate change. It could focus on anticipating, limiting and/or recovering from the impacts of climate change. It can focus on building the resilience of individuals, communities or ecosystems, or a combination of those. It can concentrate on awareness-raising, nature-based solutions, arts and storytelling, ... and/or community action. It should be implementable within the timeline defined for the whole group.
2. Announce that learners will have one week to reflect individually on the type of project they would be most interested in and define what they would be interested to contribute. More defined project ideas are welcome as well.
3. After one week, invite learners to share what they are interested in through short texts, drawings, and discussions, as a basis to form groups of 3-6 learners who will be working together. No group shall be smaller than 3 learners.
4. Provide learners with a couple of weeks to clarify their ideas, including with a more detailed plan, including context, the challenge they would like to address, their approach, the activities they would like to implement, timeframe, expected concrete results and expected impacts locally. The activities should be doable without financial support, and could include the participation of community members.
5. Encourage learners to find some practitioners and other experts in the community who could provide them with some feedback on their initiative.



Invite learners to have a few exchanges either virtually or in person as a group, provided that the latter is allowed by parents for learners below 18.

6. Invite each group of learners to test their idea through a first small scale prototype so as to gather more information about the possible limitations of their current approach. This can help learners improve the design of their initiative before implementing it on a larger scale.
7. Provide opportunities for learners to work together on their initiatives, report progress and/or ask questions to you or to the group.
8. Keep track of the timeline for the initiative to be delivered and celebrate the success of the initiatives by having a final celebration with possible presentations that would be open to other learners in the school/university, and to the parents, when possible.

Level 2: Municipal project

1. Invite learners to study the municipal adaptation plan (if any) or to contact their local government to learn more about the type of plan, programme, project they have in place to adapt to the impacts of climate change and/or build resilience locally. In case there is no action in place towards climate adaptation and/or resilience, it is possible for the learners to enquire about the plan, programme or projects that are in place to protect the environment, expand green cover, and/or restore local ecosystems. This could be a starting point to reflect upon possibilities to foster nature-based solutions for adaptation.
2. Encourage learners to check the openness of the local government to having learners support them in implementing their local climate adaptation plan, and/or in proposing new actions to build climate resilience locally. If there is interest, it is important to clearly define expectations both on the side of the government and of the different groups of learners, as well as communication modalities, deliverables and a timeline for collaboration.
3. Recommend to each group of learners to spend some time learning directly from the local governments about the actions that have been implemented already, the possible challenges that have been met, and the longer term vision that the municipality has in relation to climate change adaptation. Visiting sites where projects have been implemented is critical. Talking with beneficiaries from past or ongoing projects would also be valuable.



4. Encourage learners to schedule regular meetings with their counterparts at the municipality to check that their support has the intended impact, or that the new initiative they are working on meets the needs of the municipality.
5. Invite learners to document their exchanges, their actions as well as the difficulties they may be meeting while working on the project. Invite each group of learners to write a short synthesis report at the end of their actual project, or of their project design.
6. Organize a presentation and celebration in school/university at the end of the project, so that the different groups of learners can present their project or project design, as well as the lessons learned. Invite the municipality representatives and other community members, if possible.



Dos and don'ts

Do:

Encourage learners to spend time on the ground and with different community members to better understand the context in which they will be developing their project or initiative.

Don't

Don't prepare the learners' work too much by researching and contacting all relevant stakeholders in advance. It has to be their project, and its value is not so much in the quality of the results as in the ability of the group to take initiatives together.

Adaptations:

We invite you to adapt this activity to the specific needs of your learners, including by taking into account their neurodiversity. When adapting tools and activities for neurodivergent learners, please note it is not about treating others how you want to be treated, but how they want to be treated. Ask, listen, and stay open to different ways of learning and engaging.

References

This activity was designed by One Resilient Earth, and is inspired by the EPIC-N model.

Budowle, Rachael, Eric Krszjzaniek, and Chelsea Taylor. "[Students as change agents for community–university sustainability transition partnerships](#)." *Sustainability* 13.11 (2021): 6036.



Daneri, Daniel Rosenberg, Gregory Trencher, and John Petersen. "[Students as change agents in a town-wide sustainability transformation: The Oberlin Project at Oberlin College](#)." *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 16 (2015): 14-21.

Gruber, James S., et al. "[Enhancing climate change adaptation: strategies for community engagement and university-community partnerships](#)." *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences* 7 (2017): 10-24.

Hahn, Micah B., et al. "[Collaborative climate mitigation and adaptation planning with university, community, and municipal partners: a case study in Anchorage, Alaska](#)." *Local Environment* 25.9 (2020): 648-665.



Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

This Clarity Project Resource © 2024 by the Clarity Project Consortium is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

